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## PLATO, LUCRETIUS, AND EPICURUS

By PAUL SHOREY

DID Lucretius read Plato? Having a few hitherto unnoticed coincidences to cite, I propose to reopen the trifling question not with the expectation of proving anything in a matter hardly admitting of demonstration, but for the light which the discussion itself may throw on some points of the Epicurean tradition, and because the most poetic of philosophers and the most philosophic of poets present a parallel and an antithesis that justifies this coupling of their names. But we must first consider the possibility that Lucretius knew Plato only through Epicurus. What Lucretius may have found in the thirty-two books of the *περὶ φύσεως* it is impossible to say. But with the aid of Usener's *Epicurea*, the two treatises of Plutarch, and the tenth book of Diogenes Laertius, it is easy to enumerate the chief ascertainable points of contact between Epicurus and Plato. To begin with, Plato's polemic against the predecessors of Epicurus contains a full and lucid statement of the most distinctive doctrines of the school. Nothing is wanting to the exposition of the fundamental dogmas of materialism in the *Theaetetus*, *Sophist*, and *Laws*. The psychology of relativity and the dependence of all subjective ideas on sense-begetting modes of motion are clearly set forth in the *Philebus* and *Theaetetus*.<sup>1</sup> The 'hedonistic calculus' has never been more uncompromisingly formulated than in the *Protagoras*,<sup>2</sup> and passages in the *Republic*, *Gorgias*, and *Theaetetus* anticipate all that Epicurus had to teach of the social compact and the derivative and conventional character of political justice.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. especially Diog. L. 10, 68-69, and Sextus Empiricus *Mathem.* 7, 209, with *Theaet.* 152-154, 156-157, and *Philebus* 38-39.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Protag.* 356 with Diog. L. 10, 141 (Usener) οὐδεμία ἡδονὴ καθ' ἑαυτὸ κακόν, etc., and 10, 129 ἀλλ' ἔστιν ὅτε πολλὰς ἡδονὰς ὑπερβαίνωμεν, ὅταν πλείον ἡμῖν τὸ δυσχερές ἐκ τούτων ἔπεται, etc.

<sup>3</sup> This might have been taken for granted were it not so often overlooked. Thus Mr. Guyau, *La Morale d'Épicure*, p. 146, observes: "Ce furent Épicure dans l'antiquité et Hobbes dans les temps modernes, qui résolurent les premiers la question dans le sens utilitaire, en invoquant comme fin de la société l'intérêt de chacun de ses membres, et comme moyen d'organisation le consentement mutuel." He

And in the present state of the evidence Plato must be treated as the scientific author of these ideas. Men may have said before Plato that pleasure is the chief good, that matter is the only real, that all knowledge is relevant to the percipient, and that justice is the advantage of the stronger. But the scientific formulation of these ebullitions of cynicism and scepticism into a systematic doctrine belongs to him, and it is labor lost to try to reconstruct his sources in the Sophists with the aid of hints from Euripides and the parallels in later writers.<sup>1</sup> If we waive this larger aspect of the question, the explicit allusions of Epicurus to Plato are few. Epicurus we are told felt a marvellous scorn for his teacher, the Platonist Pamphilus,<sup>2</sup> and there are traces of gibes at Plato's character<sup>3</sup> and hostile allusions to 'scholarship,'<sup>4</sup> supersubtle refinements of style, and the Socratic irony.<sup>5</sup> The Epicurean Ἑρμαχὸς wrote a special treatise πρὸς Πλάτωνα, Colotes ridiculed the myth of Er, the son of Armenios, and Philodemus attacked the doctrine of the moral influence of music. The *Timaeus* would be especially repugnant to Epicureans, and we catch an echo of the polemics directed against it in the words of Cicero's Velleius.<sup>6</sup> The letter to Herodotus contains what seems to

forgets that the theory of the social compact as summed up by Epicurus, D. L. 10, 150, τὸ τῆς φύσεως δίκαιον ἐστὶ σύμβολον τοῦ συμφέροντος εἰς τὸ μὴ βλάπτειν ἄλλους μὴδὲ βλάπτεσθαι, is clearly set forth in *Republic* 358 E-359; and Epicurus' further inference that the right of the stronger is the only justice that exists among animals and tribes that entered into no such compact is distinctly implied in *Protag.* 322 B and *Gorg.* 483 D.

<sup>1</sup> I refer to the use which Duemmler, in his interesting *Prolegomena to Plato's Republic*, makes of Blass *de Antiphonte Sophista Iamblichi Auctore*. These so-called fragments of Antiphon contain nothing that is not found in Plato, with whom Iamblichus was familiar, and it is merely reasoning in a circle to reconstruct Antiphon out of Iamblichus' text, and then treat him as the common source of Iamblichus and Plato.

<sup>2</sup> Cicero *De Nat. Deor.* 1, 26.

<sup>3</sup> Diog. L. 10, 8 Διονυσκόδακας.

<sup>4</sup> τάχα δὲ καὶ διὰ τὴν πρὸς τοὺς περὶ Πλάτωνα . . . δυσμέλειαν says Sextus *Math.*

1, 1.

<sup>5</sup> Diog. L. 10, 13, Cicero *Brutus* 85, 292.

<sup>6</sup> *De Nat. Deor.* 1, 8, 18, *non futilis commenticiusque sententias, non opificem aedificatoremque mundi Platonis de Timaeo deum*. For further traces of polemic against the *Timaeus* cf. Proclus in *Plat. Tim.* p. 80, apud Usener, *Epicurea*, p. 257, and frgt. 6 of the 28th book περὶ φύσεως, Gomperz, *Zeitschrift f. Oesterreich. Gymn.* Vol. XVIII, p. 212 apud Munro; Usener, p. 128.

be a direct attack on Plato's theory of vision.<sup>1</sup> There is a characteristic sneer at the idea of good in the words reported by Plutarch, *Non posse suaviter vivi*, 7, p. 1091 B: καὶ αὕτη φύσις ἀγαθοῦ ἂν τις ὀρθῶς ἐπιβάλλῃ . . . καὶ μὴ κενῶς περιπατῇ περὶ ἀγαθοῦ θρυλῶν. The 37th κυρία δόξα reads like a direct reply to Plato's condemnation of those who make immutable justice depend on legislative enactment.<sup>2</sup> Epicurus' protest against the attempt to explain the simple idea of time by any substitution of other terms may be a covert polemic against Plato's 'moving image of eternity.'<sup>3</sup> Olympiodorus reports what seems an attack on the *Philebus* in the words 'Επίκουρος οὐκ αἰεταὶ μίγνυσθαι λύπην ἡδονῇ, μηδὲ γὰρ ἀγαθῷ τὸ κακόν. And the statement reported by Philodemus that πολιτική is not a science or art is a flat contradiction of a distinctive Platonic doctrine.

The possible positive indebtedness of the Epicurean psychology and ethics to Plato has already been indicated in general terms, and there is no space to work out the details.<sup>4</sup> One interesting verbal coincidence may be noted — the use of the term ἄθροισμα for body, viewed not merely as a material aggregate of atoms, but as a metaphysical complex of qualities.<sup>5</sup> These instances hardly create a presumption that any

<sup>1</sup> Diog. L. 10, 49 οὐδὲ διὰ τινῶν ἀκτίνων ἢ οἶων δὴ ποτε ῥευμάτων ἀφ' ἡμῶν πρὸς ἐκεῖνα παραγινομένων, etc. Cf. *Timaeus*, 45 C, τὸ τῆς βίωσις ρεῖμα, τότε' ἐκπίπτει, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the words οὐδὲν ἦττον ἐκείνων τὸν χρόνον ἢν δίκαιον τοῖς μὴ φωναῖς κεναῖς ἑαυτοὺς συνταράττουσιν ἀλλ' εἰς τὰ πράγματα βλέπουσιν with Plato *Theaetetus*. 177 D, ἂν θῆται πόλις δόξαντα αὐτῇ, ταῦτα καὶ ἐστὶ δίκαια τῇ θεμένῃ, ἔωσπερ ἂν κέηται.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Diog. L. 10, 72, with *Tim.* 37 D.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. further the distinction between necessary and unnecessary desires, Diog. L. 10, 127, 148-149, *Republic* 558 DE; the insistence that pleasure is inseparable from virtue Diog. L. 10, 132, 140, *Latus* 734 AB; πρόσληψις as a precondition of any enquiry οὐκ ἂν ἐξηγήσαμεν τὸ ζητούμενον, εἰ μὴ πρότερον ἐγνώκειμεν αὐτό, Diog. L. 10, 33, cf. *Meno* 80 E seq.; the use made of the Empedoclean ἀπορροαὶ in the theory of sensation, Diog. L. 10, 53, *Meno* 76 D, *Timaeus* 67 C; the Democritean γαλήνη *Phaedo* 84 A, Diog. L. 10, 37, 83. The moral interpretation of βεβαιεῖν ἑαυτῷ *Gorg.* 522 C, Diog. L. 10, 35.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Sextus Empiricus *Math.* 10, 257, Diog. L. 10, 63, 142. Plato, *Theaetetus*. 157 B ὅ δὲ ἄθροισματι ἀνθρωπίνον τε τίθενται καὶ λίθον, etc. Campbell thinks the 'whole' here is rather an aggregate of individuals in a class idea than of attributes in a thing. But that the latter is meant appears from the passages cited above as well as from Sextus 9, 339 and Alcinous *εἰσαγωγή* 4, a chapter in which the psychology of the *Theaetetus* is closely followed. Alcinous distinguishes (1) λευκότης

allusions to Plato detected in Lucretius came by way of Epicurus. The more obvious parallels are cited by Munro.<sup>1</sup> Woltjer (*Lucretii Philosophia cum fontibus comparata*) finds only one point of contact. The dysteleology of the fine passage 5, 110-235 is directed, he thinks, primarily not against the Stoic thesis μηδὲν εἶναι ἑγκλητον τῷ κόσμῳ, but against the optimistic teleology of Plato's *Timaeus*. But in view of the evidence of Epicurean polemic against that work he finally concludes that Lucretius is here merely following his master. Such being the state of the question, students of Plato and Lucretius may be interested in the following parallels whether they demonstrate anything or not.

The *Timaeus* from its theme takes the first place in any comparison of Plato and Lucretius. The most noteworthy parallel is that between *Tim.* 50 E and Lucret. 2, 845. Plato illustrates the thought that the recipient of all forms and qualities must itself be formless by the following image: δὲ καὶ πάντων ἐκτὸς εἰδὼν εἶναι χρεὼν τὸ τὰ πάντα ἐκδεξόμενον ἐν αὐτῷ γένῃ, καθάπερ περὶ τὰ ἀλείμματα ὅποσα εὐώδη, τέχνη μηχανῶνται πρῶτον τοῦτ' αὐτὸ ὑπάρχον, ποιοῦσιν ὅ τι μάλιστα αὔδη τὰ δεξόμενα ὑγρὰ τὰς ὀσμάς κτλ. Nothing better exhibits the fertility of Plato's suggestions than the fact that, while Aristotle took from this passage the hint for his argument that the pure reason which knows all things must be free from admixture,<sup>2</sup> Lucretius borrows the image to enforce the doctrine that the atoms as bearers of all secondary qualities are themselves without any sensuous determinations. 2, 847:

*Sicut amaracini blandum stactaeque liquorem | et nardi florem, nectar  
qui naribushalat, | cum facere instituas, cum primis quaerere par est, |  
quod licet ac possis reperire inolentis olivi | naturam, nullam quae mittat  
naribus auram, | quam minime ut possit mixtos in corpore odores | concoc-  
tosque suo contractans perdere viro, | propter candem rem debent primordia rerum | non adhibere suum gignundis rebus odorem, etc.*

(2) τὸ λευκὸν (3) μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα τὸ ἄθροισμα ὁσόν πῦρ. The lexicons, especially L. and S., are all astray. Cf. further Usener, p. 196.

<sup>1</sup> 2, 79 *viti lampada* with *Laws* 776 B; 3, 873 *sincerum sonere* with *Theaet.* 179 D; the hypocoristic lover 4, 1160 with *Republic* 474 D, a frequent motif of comedy; the dissipation of the soul like smoke or vapor, 3, 456 with *Phaedo* 70; the comparison of our fear of death to the terrors of children in the dark, 2, 55, *Phaedo* 77 E; the use of *articulat* 4, 551 with that of *διηθρῶσατο* *Protag.* 322 A; the social compact 5, 1020 with *Republic* 358-359.

<sup>2</sup> *De an.* 429a, 20.

Other resemblances are more easily felt than described. Plato's theory of matter is, as Windelband observes, essentially atomic and Democritean, despite the half serious Pythagoreanizing mathematical form in which it is disguised. And, while there is no express coincidence, there is a broad general likeness in the language used by Plato and Lucretius in describing the relations that obtain between the shapes of the elemental particles and the sensations which they cause.<sup>1</sup>

We may note further: (1) The emphasis laid upon the idea of cause at the outset though for opposite ends.<sup>2</sup> (2) The distinction between permanent and transitory being and the protest, though with different application, against confounding the two by the double meaning of the verb to be.<sup>3</sup> (3) The common background of chaos derived from Hesiod and the Pre-Socratics.<sup>4</sup> For aesthetic reasons and to save the eternity of the existing order of the world Plato entirely absorbs this chaos into the cosmos.<sup>5</sup> But in *Polit.* 273 D he seems to recognize it as still subsisting outside of the world, and he agrees with Lucretius in a certain large way of speaking of the wholeness and com-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. on the one hand *Tim.* 58 B, τὰ σμικρὰ εἰς τὰ τῶν μεγάλων διάκενα ξυνθεῖ—58 D τὸ μὲν οὖν ὑγρὸν διὰ τὸ μετέχον εἶναι τῶν γενῶν τῶν ὕδατος ὅσα σμικρὰ ἀνίσων ὄντων κινητικόν, etc.,—59 B τῷ δὲ μέγιστα ἐντὸς αὐτοῦ διαλείμματα ἔχειν κουφώτερον (cf. Lucret. 1, 364–367)—61 D ἡ πῦρ θερμὸν λέγομεν . . . τὴν διάκρυσιν καὶ τομὴν αὐτοῦ . . . ἐννοηθέντες—62 A κερματίζουσα—65 C φαίνεται δὲ καὶ ταῦτα, ὥσπερ οὖν καὶ τὰ πολλὰ, διὰ συγκρίσεών τε τινῶν καὶ διακρίσεων γίγνεσθαι . . . τραχύτησι τε καὶ λειώτησιν—65 D ξυνάγει τὰ φλέβια καὶ ἀποξηραίνει, etc.—ῥυπτικά καὶ πᾶν τὸ περὶ τὴν γλῶτταν ἀποπλύνοντα (cf. Lucret. 4, 249 *perterget*)—67 C ὅψει ξύμμετρα μόρια ἔχουσιν πρὸς ἀσθησιν—67 E τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν τὰς διεξόδους βίᾳ διωθοῦσαν καὶ τήκουσαν, etc. And on the other hand Lucret. 2, 385 sqq. *cicestem fulminis ignem | suptilem magis e parvis constare figuris*, etc.—394 *hamatis inter se perque plicatis*—401 *pertorquent ora sapore*—406 *vias rescindere nostris sensibus*—420 *qui compungunt aciem*, etc.—432 *dentata compungere sensus*—460, 469–70, 3; 185–195, —4, 249, 277 *et quasi perterget pupillas*—344, 620, 625–7, 650–665, 660 *contractabiliter cunulas intrare palati*—716 *pupillas interfodiunt*, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Tim.* 28 A, Lucret. 1, 150 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> *Tim.* 27 D, Lucret. 1, 215 sqq., *Tim.* 38 B τὸ τε γεγονός εἶναι γεγονός, etc., Lucret. 1, 464 *belloque subactas | Troiugenas gentes cum dicunt esse videndumst | ne forte haec per se cogant nos esse fateri*. But whereas Lucretius, 1, 478, regards *res gestae* as less real than bodies, Plato, *Cratyl.* 386 E holds that ἐν τι εἶδος τῶν ὄντων εἰσὶν αἱ πράξεις, and censures materialists for not recognizing this, *Theaet.* 155 E.

<sup>4</sup> *Tim.* 30 A, 53 A, Lucret. 5, 435.

<sup>5</sup> *Tim.* 33 A C.

pleteness of the All.<sup>1</sup> (4) Both describe in similar terms the disintegration ultimately effected in every organic or cosmic aggregate by the unceasing impingement of external forces,<sup>2</sup> and the continual influx and efflux that mark the growth and decay of the animal body.<sup>3</sup> (5) A certain periphrastic elaboration of phrase, sometimes merely a conventional poetic diction, sometimes used especially of processes and ingenious mechanisms of nature.<sup>4</sup> (6) Lastly, Plato anticipates Lucretius in the correct account of the images presented by laterally concave mirrors<sup>5</sup> and in the fancy that the sun and moon taught mankind mathematics.<sup>6</sup> But transcending all coincidences of detail is the spiritual affinity of imaginative insight and poetic temper that has associated these expositions of antithetic philosophies in the enthusiastic admiration of ages which, like the Renaissance and our own time, are repelled by the lifeless pedantry of Aristotle and the Stoics. The *Timaeus* and the *De Rerum Natura* were both composed under the immediate inspiration of the Pre-Socratic poet-philosophers. They are 'Hymns of the Universe' rather than dry inventories of phaenomena. Guided by a few great thoughts, their majestic rhetoric sweeps across the entire field of knowledge from the origins of the world to the diseases of the human body. Both approach the investigation of nature in a spirit of glad wonder and awe. Both thrill with a sense of the beauty of the cosmos, the glory of the sum of things, that reflects itself in a sustained intensity of rhythm, diction, and vivid imagery. Nothing is viewed in disconnection, lifeless and inert. Everywhere there is a sense of largeness and

<sup>1</sup> Lucret. 1, 963; 2, 305; 5, 361; *Tim.* 33 CD. Cf. Empedocles 92 τοῦτο δ' ἐπαυξήσκει τὸ πᾶν τί κε καὶ ποθεν ἐλθόν; Cf. D. L. 10, 39.

<sup>2</sup> Lucret. 2, 1146 *nec tuditantia rem cessant extrinsecus ullam corpora conficere et phlogis infesta domare*. Cf. 4, 933 sqq. *Tim.* 33 A περισταμένα ἔωθεν καὶ προσπίπτοντα ἀκαίρως λυίει — 43 BC τὰ τῶν προσπιπτόντων παθήματα, etc. — 81 A τὰ μὲν γὰρ δὴ περιεστώτα ἐκτὸς ἡμᾶς τήκει, etc.

<sup>3</sup> *Tim.* 43 A, ἐκίρρυτον σῶμα, 80 E τὰ τῆς τροφῆς νάματα . . . ἐκίρρυτα. Lucret. 2, 1112-1145 *fluere, liquitur, fluendo*, etc.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. Lucret. 1, 321 *natura videndi*; 2, 400 *natura absinthii*; *Tim.* 45 E τὴν τῶν βλεφάρων φύσιν, 75 D τὴν φύσιν τοῦ προσώπου, 76 E, 82 D. Lucret. 3, 255 *per caulas corporis omnis*, 702, 4, 620; *Tim.* 70 B διὰ πάντων τῶν στενωπῶν. Cf. also 4, 828 sqq. with *Tim.* 44 E ἐκτατά τε κῶλα καὶ καμπτά and *Phaedo* 98 D.

<sup>5</sup> *Tim.* 46 BC; Lucret. 4, 312 sqq.

<sup>6</sup> Lucret. 5, 1437; *Tim.* 47 A. Cf. *Epinomis* 978 D.

wholeness, and we are aware of nature related, moving, and alive in all her parts and processes. And the instinct of a Giordano Bruno that feels this deeper likeness is a sounder guide than classifications based on oppositions of dogma.

After the *Timaeus* the greatest number of coincidences is found in the *Latw*, a work more justly appreciated in antiquity than in modern times. In *Latw* 660 A we have apparently the first instance of the comparison of the poet to the physician who conveys nauseous but salutary drugs in sweets.<sup>1</sup> But this, like the *vitali lampada*, may well have been a literary commonplace in Lucretius' time.<sup>2</sup> The simile from defective foundations that betray the superstructure 793 C is very closely followed by Lucretius 4, 513, οἷον τεκτόνων ἐν οἰκοδομήμασιν ἐρείσματα ἐκ μέσου ὑπορρέοντα, συμπέπτειν εἰς ταῦτόν ποιεῖ τὰ ξύμπαντα κῆσθαί τε ἄλλα ὑφ' ἐτέρων αὐτὰ τε καὶ τὰ καλῶς ὕστερον ἐποικοδομηθέντα, τῶν ἀρχαίων ὑποπεσόντων. *Denique ut in fabrica, si prava est regula prima, | norma que si fallax rectis regionibus exit, | et libella aliqua si ex parti claudicat hilum, | omnia mendose fieri atque obstipa necesse est | prava cubantia prona supina atque absona tecta, | iam ruere ut quaedam videantur velle, ruantque | prodita iudiciis fallacibus omnia primis, | sic igitur ratio, etc.*

An expression in Lucretius 4, 376, for which Munro cites no parallel, *quasi in ignem lana trahatur*, finds apt illustration in the proverbial εἰς πῦρ ξαίνειν of *Latw* 780 C, now correctly rendered by Jowett but mistranslated in the earlier editions. This parallel, if it be one, makes against the sufficiently improbable view of Erasmus and Stephanus' Thesaurus that εἰς πῦρ ξαίνειν = ξαίνειν πληγὰς εἰς πῦρ.

Still more interesting is the coincidence in thought between the argument in Lucretius 5, 325 sqq. and *Latw* 677 D. Epicurus had said ὅτι οὐδὲν ξῖνον ἐν τῷ παντὶ ἀποτελεῖται παρὰ τὸν ἤδη γεγεννημένον χρόνον ἀπειρον.<sup>3</sup> Lucretius infers that our particular world and civilization are young because new discoveries have been made within the last one thousand years and are still being made. Similarly in *Latw* 677 C it is asked: Πῶς γὰρ ἂν, ὃ ἄριστε, εἰ γε ἔμενε τάδε οὕτω

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Lucret. 1, 936. There is a hint of it in *Cratylus* 394 A.

<sup>2</sup> Lucret. 2, 79; *Latw* 776 B.

<sup>3</sup> Plut. apud Euseb. *Praep. Ev.* 1, 8, 8.



τὸν πάντα χρόνον, ὥς τὴν διακεκόσμηται, καινὸν ἀνευρίσκειτο ποτε καὶ θνίσκῃ;<sup>1</sup> Plato's explanation both here and in the *Timaeus* is that the arts and sciences are periodically wiped out by cataclysms or conflagrations. And this alternative, too, Lucretius proceeds to discuss in lines 338 sqq. This coincidence invites a fuller comparison of the account of primitive life and the first steps in human progress in the fifth book of Lucretius with Plato's treatment of the same theme. Plato himself had been preceded by the fifth century Sophists and dramatists, as we see from the myth attributed to Protagoras, and the long list of parallels to the speech of Prometheus in Aeschylus.<sup>2</sup> The chief Platonic passages are *Laws*, 3, 677 sqq.; *Protag.* 322 sqq.; *Timaeus* 23; *Critias* 109-110; *Politicus* 274 BCD.

Plato of course differs from Lucretius in that he starts from a cataclysm rather than from the absolute *novitas mundi*, and that, like the poets, he personifies in some beneficent deity the inventive genius of humanity.<sup>3</sup> But this in no wise lessens the interest of the coincidences in detail. The chief common traits are: The terror-stricken, helpless estate of primitive man,<sup>4</sup> as contrasted with animals for whose comfort and *preservation* Nature provides;<sup>5</sup> his exposure to wild beasts;<sup>6</sup> the

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<sup>1</sup> The sequel also should be compared with Lucretius. The text is not in order, but there is no doubt as to the meaning which Jowett utterly misrepresents: "and if things had always continued as they are at present ordered, how could any discovery have ever been made even in the least particular."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Plato, *Repub.* 522 D; Aeschylus, *Prom.* 445 sqq.; *Palamedes* fr. 182; Soph. *Antig.* 333 sqq., fr. 399; Eurip. *Suppl.* 201 sqq., *Palamedes* fr. 578; Critias, *Sisyphus*, Nauck, p. 771; Moschion fr. 6, Nauck, p. 813; Adespota 470, Nauck, p. 931; Duemmler, *Proleg. in Plat. Rep.* pp. 28-29; *Akademika*, 237 sqq.; Weber in *Leipziger Studien*, X, 118. Weber and Duemmler class Plato with Dicaearchus and the Stoics who held that man had sunk from a more blessed condition as against Theophrastus and the Epicureans who thought that he had risen out of primitive animality. But to attempt to ticket Plato in this fashion is to ignore the irony of *Politicus* 272 C, *Laws* 678 B, 679 A BC and *Repub.* 372 D.

<sup>3</sup> *Laws* 679 B, *Polit.* 274 C, *Cratyl.* 438 C. Lucretius, on the other hand, is careful to represent man's natural wit as the source of language 5, 1028, of the discovery of fire 5, 1091 sqq., and the arts 5, 1261; 1452.

<sup>4</sup> *Laws* 678 C φόβος θναυτός, 677 E φοβηρὰν ἐρημίαν, *Crit.* 109 E ἐν ἀπορίᾳ.

<sup>5</sup> Lucret. 5, 222 sqq., 233 *tulenter*, 859 *tulata*. *Protag.* 320 E ἄλλην τιν' αὐτοῖς ἐμνηχάτω δυνάμιν εἰς σωτηρίαν κτλ.

<sup>6</sup> *Protag.* 322 A; *Polit.* 274 C; *Laws* 681 A, Lucret. 5, 982 sqq.

absence of war;<sup>1</sup> of gold;<sup>2</sup> of iron and fire;<sup>3</sup> of the arts of agriculture;<sup>4</sup> navigation;<sup>5</sup> of luxury and gross inequalities in wealth;<sup>6</sup> the gradual discovery or recovery of these things;<sup>7</sup> the first building of cities;<sup>8</sup> the introduction of moral and political ideas;<sup>9</sup> the social compact;<sup>10</sup> the comparatively late appearance of letters and trustworthy historical traditions.<sup>11</sup> Language and religion of course are treated from diametrically opposite points of view. A quaint detail, 5, 973, is curiously explained by an etymology of the *Cratylus* 418 D. Lucretius denies that primitive man passed the night in terror-stricken longing for the sunlight. He was used to recurrent darkness. Against whom is this remark directed? 'The Stoics,' says Munro. If so, it must have been the "Proto-Stoics." For Plato derives *ἡμέρα* from *ἡμέρα* . . . *ὅτι ἀσμένους τοῖς ἀνθρώποις καὶ ἡμέρονουσιν ἐκ τοῦ σκοτίους τὸ φῶς ἐγγίγνεται*.

Outside of the *Timaeus* and the *Laws* coincidences are sporadic and accidental, since Lucretius' theme was not concerned with the logical and ethical enquiries that occupy the dialogues.<sup>12</sup> There is one passage,

<sup>1</sup> Lucret. 6, 999, *Protag.* 322 B, *Laws* 678 E. Both find its origin in the growth of wealth, Lucret. 5, 1434, *Phaedo* 66 C, *Repub.* 586 B, 373 E. But Lucretius 5, 1419 sqq. explicitly protests against Plato's half serious assertion that the simpler goods of primitive times aroused no jealousy or private strife, *Laws* 678 E.

<sup>2</sup> Lucret. 5, 1113, *Laws* 679 B.

<sup>3</sup> *Laws* 678 E, *Protag.* 321 D, Lucret. 5, 1090 sqq., 1241 sqq.

<sup>4</sup> Lucret. 5, 933, *Laws* 680 E, 681 A.

<sup>5</sup> Lucret. 5, 1006, *Laws* 678 C.

<sup>6</sup> Lucret. 5, 1008, 1112 sqq., *Laws* 679 AB.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Usus* 5, 1452 with *χρηλα*, *Polit.* 274 C.

<sup>8</sup> Lucret. 5, 1108, *Protag.* 322 B, *Laws* 681 B sqq.

<sup>9</sup> Lucret. 5, 958, 1020-1028, 1140-1155, *Laws* 681 CD, *Protag.* 322 CD.

<sup>10</sup> 5, 1140-1155; cf. *supra*, p. 201, n. 3.

<sup>11</sup> 5, 1446 *propterea quid sit prius actum respicere actas | nostra nequit, nisi quae ratio vestigia monstrat*. Cf. *Critias* 110 A; *Timaeus* 23 B.

<sup>12</sup> The treatment of love at the close of the fourth book has touches which suggest the *Phaedrus* and *Symposium*. Cf. 4, 1121 sqq. with *Phaedr.* 252 A, and 4, 1110 with *Symp.* 192. The comparison of the nursing woman to the earth, 5, 813-815, reminds us of *Menexenus* 237-238. The comparison of the elements of the alphabet to the elements of things, 1, 197, 912; 2, 688, 1013, is a favorite Platonic image — *Polit.* 278, *Tim.* 48 B, *Theaet.* 201 E. The image in 2, 365 *derivare animum* for which Munro can find no parallel is akin at least to the use of *ἀνωχρευνόμενον* in *Repub.* 485 D. The moral application of *pertusum vas* in 3, 1009 and 6, 20 is like that in *Gorgias* 493 B. Cf. further 1, 263 with *Phaedo* 71-72 and the moral senti-

however, that demands special consideration. In 3, 358 sqq. Lucretius attacks the theory that it is the mind which sees using the eyes only as a door for the admission of sensations. In that case, he dryly observes, we ought to see better when the doors are removed, posts and all. A similar image is found in Sextus Empiricus, *Math.* 7, 350 οἱ δὲ αὐτὴν (τὴν διάνοιαν) εἶναι τὰς αἰσθήσεις καθάπερ διὰ τινων ὀπῶν τῶν αἰσθητηρίων προκύπτουσιν. Elsewhere, *ibid.* 130, Sextus says of Heracleitus ἐν δὲ ἐγρηγοροῦσι πάλιν διὰ τῶν αἰσθητικῶν πόρων ὥσπερ διὰ τινων θυρίδων προκύψας (sc. ὁ νοῦς). Accordingly, La Salle, Woltjer, and Munro assume that Lucretius is combating Heracleitus. The resemblance, however, is confined to the image. There is no parallelism in the thought. Epicurus taught that the body feels and perceives as well as the mind. Lucretius is opposing the doctrine that the mind alone feels and knows using the organs of sense as mere channels and instruments. There is no trace of this idea in Heracleitus. In the passage before us Heracleitus is explaining how the individual mind renews its connection with the universal mind through eye-gate and ear-gate. The question whether sensation and perception reside in the body or the mind has not been raised. But in Plato's *Theaetetus*, the source of so much later psychology, attention is called to this specific problem, 184 C: σκόπει γάρ, ἀπόκρισις ποτέρα ὀρθοτέρα, ᾧ ὀρῶμεν, τοῦτο εἶναι ὀφθαλμούς, ἢ δι' οὗ ὀρῶμεν (cf. *Tim.* 51 C). It seems probable then that Lucretius is following Epicurus in a polemic against this Platonic thought. We cannot be sure that the image in Sextus goes back to Heracleitus.<sup>1</sup> In any case, once set in circulation it was liable to be used for picturesque effect apart from its original context.

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ment of 5, 1118 with *Laws* 736 E. Note also the almost direct contradiction of *Cratyl.* 400 A, where the soul holds the body, by 3, 435 sqq.; of *Phaedo* 109 AB by the polemic against the *medii cupido* in 1, 1082; and the striking coincidence of the rhetorical question in 2, 1095 *quis regere immensi summam . . . quis pariter caelos omnis convertere*, with the like question in *Epinomis* 983 A *τις τρόπος ἂν εἴη τοσοῦτον περιφέρειν ὄγκον*; etc.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Zeller, *Phil. d. Griechen*, I, 707.